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mained during the usurpation; and in it General Ludlow resided for some time during the year 1653; the effects of these successive attacks are still visible, in the shattered appearance of the walls; and several cannon balls have been found about it, one of which weighed thirty-nine pounds.

Bunratty gives name to a barony and parish, in the diocese of Killaloe, is situated near the town of Meelick, and is distant from Dublin about ninety-seven miles.

R. A.

VENTRILOQUISM.

SIR—The very humorous story which appeared in your last, by the "Ettrick Shepherd," having recalled to my memory some similar feats of the ventriloquistic art, if I may be allowed so to express myself, I beg to offer them for the amusement and information of your readers; and by the way, I may be allowed to remark, it is altogether a misnomer to call modern performers in that way, *ventriloquists*, inasmuch as they appear more frequently to speak from the pockets of their neighbours, or from the roof or distant corners of the room, than from their own mouths or stomachs. As the ancient ventriloquists when exercising their art, seemed generally to speak from their own stomachs, the name by which they were designated was abundantly significant. Some fair traces of this art are to be found in the writings of the ancients; and it is the opinion of M. de la Chapelle, who in the year 1772 published an ingenious work on the subject, that the responses of many of the oracles of old were delivered by persons thus qualified, to serve the purposes of priest-craft and delusion.

From Brodeau, a learned critic of the 16th century, we have the following account of the feats of a capital ventriloquist and cheat, who was valet de chambre to Francis the First. The fellow, whose name was Louis Brabant, had fallen desperately in love with a young, handsome, and rich heiress; but was rejected by the parents as an unsuitable match for their daughter, on account of the lowness of his circumstances. The young lady's father dying, he made a visit to the widow, who was totally ignorant of his singular talent. Suddenly, on his first appearance, in open day, in her own house, and in the presence of several persons who were with her, she heard herself accosted, in a voice perfectly resembling that of her dead husband, and which seemed to proceed from above, exclaiming—"give my daughter in marriage to Louis Brabant; he is a man of great fortune, and of an excellent character. If you obey this admonition you will provide a worthy husband for your daughter, and procure everlasting repose for the soul of your poor husband." The widow could not for a moment resist this dreadful summons, which had not the most distant appearance of proceeding from Louis Brabant; whose countenance exhibited no visible change, and whose lips were closed and motionless during the delivery of it. Accordingly, she consented immediately to receive him for her son-in-law. Louis's finances were, however, in a very low condition; and the formalities of the marriage contract rendered it necessary for him to exhibit some show of riches, and not give the lie direct. He accordingly went to work upon a fresh subject—one Cornu, an old rich banker at Lyons, who had accumulated immense wealth by usury and extortion, and was known to be haunted by a remorse of conscience, on account of the manner in which he had acquired it. Having contracted an intimate acquaintance with this man, he, one day while they were sitting together, in the usurer's little back parlour, artfully turned the conversation to religious subjects, on demons, and spectres, and the torments of hell. During an interval of silence between them, a voice was heard, which, to the astonished banker, seemed to be that of his deceased father, calling upon him to deliver into the hands of Louis Brabant, then with him, a large sum for the redemption of Christians in slavery with the Turks, threatening him at the same time with eternal damnation if he did not take this method to expiate his own sins.—The reader will naturally suppose that Louis affected a due degree of astonishment on the occasion; and further prompted the deception by acknowledging his having de-

voted himself to the prosecution of the charitable design imputed to him by the ghost. An old usurer is naturally suspicious. Accordingly the wary banker made a second appointment with the ghost's delegate, for the next day; and to render any design of imposing upon him utterly abortive, took him into the open fields, where not a house, or a tree, or even a bush or pit, were in sight, capable of screening any supposed confederate. This extraordinary caution excited the ventriloquist to exert all the powers of his art. Wherever the banker conducted him, at every step his ears were saluted with the complaints and groans not only of his father, but of all his deceased relations, imploring him to have mercy on his own soul and theirs, by effectually seconding with his purse, the intentions of his worthy companion. Cornu could no longer resist, and accordingly carried his guest home with him and paid him ten thousand crowns down; with which the ventriloquist returned to Paris, and married his mistress. The catastrophe was fatal. The secret was afterwards disclosed, and reached the usurer's ears, who was so much affected by the loss of his money, and the mortifying raileries of his neighbours, that he took to his bed and died.

A ventriloquist, who performed feats somewhat similar to these, when in Edinburgh a short time since, astonished a number of persons in the fish-market, by making a fish appear to speak, and give the lie to its vender, who affirmed that it was fresh, and caught in the morning. This man was illiterate, and though very communicative, could not make intelligible the manner in which he produced these acoustic deceptions. Indeed if he had, we should hardly have described the practical rules of the art to the public, for though it is proper to make the existence of such an art universally known, it will readily occur to every reflecting mind, that the attainment of it should not be rendered easy to those who, like Louis Brabant, might make it subservient to the purposes of knavery and deception.

The most laughable trick practised by a ventriloquist, was that put upon the driver of a stage-coach in England, by Monsieur Alexandre. The coach was passing out of a town in Yorkshire, empty inside, and having five outside passengers, besides the coachman. On a sudden a voice was heard calling out to the driver to stop; the man accordingly drew up, descended from his box, but looked about in vain for his expected passenger. He mounted, and began to move onwards, when three or four voices were heard, exclaiming, "stop, stop!"—an old woman's and a child's were particularly audible. Again the coach stopped, again the driver descended—no human creature was to be seen. The passengers as well as the coachman began to express some alarm, fearing something beyond natural agency. However, they drove on, and were just beginning to ascend a hill, when a voice, as if from the inside, cried out, "put me down here! I must get out!" The coachman knew no one could be inside, and vociferating pretty heartily, "the devil!" leaped from his seat and ran up the hill with all his might, leaving the affrighted passengers to shift for themselves. At length M. Alexandre, who was one of them, evinced the rest of his powers, told who he was, and undeceived poor Jehu, when they got to a neighbouring inn, to which he had fled for refuge.

LINES FROM A GENTLEMAN TO HIS WIFE, WITH A NEW WEDDING RING.

Grieve not my dearest, though the token
Of our first union has been broken:
For, with another purer ring,*
To thee a truer heart I bring;
To thee, who ever hast through life
Been the fond friend, and fonder wife;
And who hast brought me children seven,
Five still on earth, and two in heaven.
Then grieve not, dearest, though the token
Of our first union has been broken:
The gold may break or wear away,
But love like mine, can ne'er decay.